

4 January 1955

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FILE
COBAT

MEMORANDUM FOR: Special Assistant to the Director

SUBJECT: OCB Report on Television in Europe

1. This paper has considerable merit but is not, in my judgment, ready to go to the Board. For example:

a. It is too long and needs tightening up.

b. The tentative suggestions (page 10) deal primarily with the feasibility of jamming communist telecasts. We already know it is feasible under certain conditions to interfere with TV signals; the important question is do we want to adopt such tactics in complete reversal of our policy to encourage free information and cultural exchanges.

c. The report bases the feasibility of Eurovision on the development of coaxial cables and microwave links and a supranational authority for handling the traffic. The future of Eurovision depends not only on the development of simultaneous broadcasts via cables, etc., but on the more complete development of the present exchanges of film which constitute a large part of the present Eurovision program exchange. Furthermore, there are simple mechanisms such as the International Postal Union for resolving problems of rate structures, etc., in international traffic.

d. The paper implies that the principal obstacle to the development of a NATO television network is British intransigence but does not deal with the important question of should a NATO network be encouraged despite the political objections. (Nothing would be more deadly to European television development than to have it labeled as a NATO or U. S. dominated operation. I cannot imagine Finland, Sweden, Switzerland or Austria becoming part of such a group.) Additionally, there is the record of NATO's inability to

develop a simple information program due to each member nation's insistence on veto power in connection with each operation.

e. There are a few statements in the report that need checking up. For example, page 7, "The station in Berlin is a logical location for coverage of large population areas in West Germany." I doubt that such a station would be heard beyond West Berlin.

f. The PP analysis of world-wide television is in final stages of drafting. It will contain information and doctrine that would strengthen the USIA paper.

2. I would suggest that your position Friday be as follows:

a. That the paper makes a valuable contribution to the subject.

b. That you think it needs further development and could be improved by interagency coordination.

c. That you concur in the recommendation that it be referred to the OCB committee on broadcasting and television and the TPIB for coordination and redrafting.

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3. [REDACTED] concurs.

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